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The Rise of
Lana Del Rey:
Indie Pop Star

Did You Know
That There's a
Tunnel Under
Ocean Blvd

Lana
Del Rey

"Live fast. Die young.
Be wild. Have fun."

The Rise of Lana Del Rey

Lana Del Rey envisioned a Southern California dream world constructed out of sad girls and bad boys, manufactured melancholy, and genuine glamour, and then she came to embody this fantasy.

It was a stylized noir-pop vibe she conjured from the start on her 2012 debut album, *Born to Die*. Following a hit remix of her single “Summertime Sadness,” she steadily gained not only popularity but respect; her second LP, 2014’s *Ultraviolence*, received positive reviews that accompanied its sales, and her imitators (of which there were many) became merely an alluring accessory. With subsequent albums like 2019’s Grammy-nominated *Norman Fucking Rockwell!*, 2021’s *Blue Banisters*, and 2023’s *Did you know*

a tunnel under Ocean Blvd, Del Rey grew more and more into the ideal she intended to be: a damaged torch singer designed as the tragic romantic icon for her age.

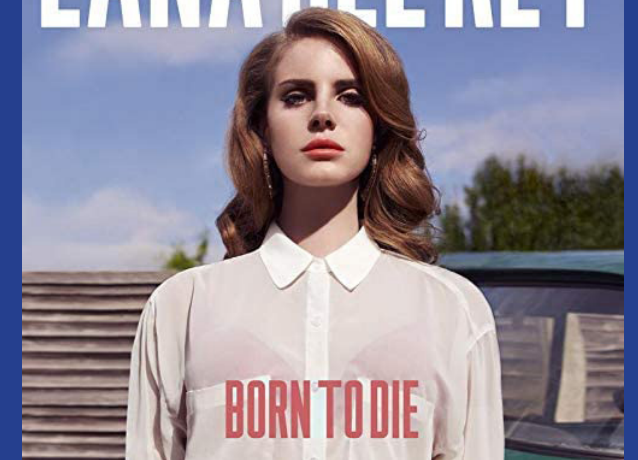
Lana Del Rey’s journey to this stardom was a long, steady climb. Born Elizabeth Woolridge Grant in New York City to a pair of wealthy parents, she was raised in Lake Placid, not starting to pursue music until she was out of high school and living with her aunt and uncle on Long Island. Her uncle taught her how

she signed with 5 Points Records in 2006, recording an EP called *Kill Kill* with producer David Kahne, who would prove to be her first pivotal collaborator. *Kill Kill* appeared digitally in 2008, and over the next two years, Grant became Lana Del Rey, digitally releasing a full self-titled album under that name in 2010. Not long after its release, she

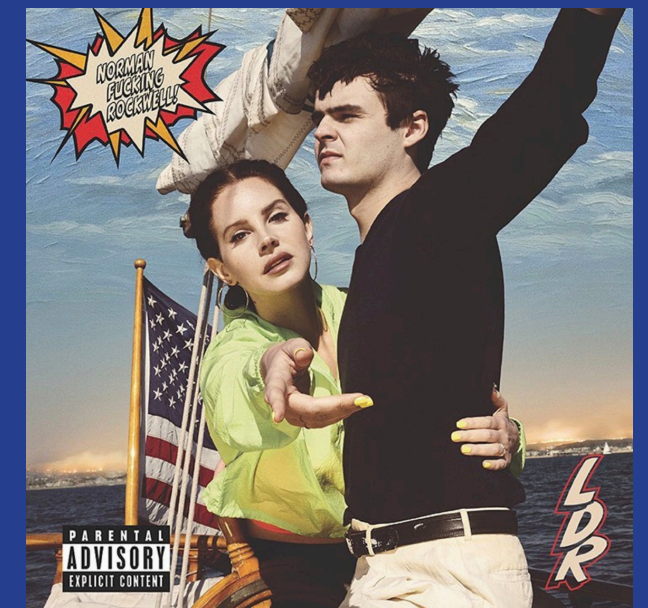
teamed with managers Ben Mawson and Ed Millett, who helped her separate from 5 Points (rights to her recordings reverted back to her), and she moved to England, where she began crafting

BORN TO DIE

LANA DEL REY



“they mistook my kindness for weakness.”



NORMAN FUCKING ROCKWELL!

DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE'S A TUNNEL UNDER OCEAN BLVD

Lana Del Rey could have retired after the cinematic grandeur of her 2019 high-water mark Norman Fucking Rockwell!

Del Rey wasted no time flowing Ultra-violence. In early 2015, she worked on a third full-length album, and she co-headlined a summer tour with Courtney Love. Preceded by the singles “High by the Beach” and “Terrence Loves You,” the album, titled *Honey Moon*, saw release that September. It topped the charts in a handful of countries, peaking at number two on the Billboard 200. In addition to touring in support of *Honeymoon*, she contributed vocals to the Weeknd’s chart-topping third LP, *Starboy*, and began recording for her own follow-up. Grammy nomination for Best Pop nomination for

“Dancin’ like the young and restless And I’m obsessed with it.”

Best Pop Vocal Album. The following year, she began rolling out singles in advance of her fifth album, *Norman Fucking Rockwell!*, beginning with “Mariners Apartment Complex” and “Venice Bitch.” The trickle of new music continued throughout 2019 with a steady stream of new songs, some one-offs, and some album tracks. After ramping up excitement for the record with a cover of Sublime’s “Doin’ Time” and a two-part joint single, “Fuck It I Love You”/“The Greatest,” *Norman Fucking Rockwell!* was released in late August 2019. It received Grammy nominations for Album of the Year as well as Song of the Year for

The official follow-up to *Norman Fucking Rockwell!*, *Chemtrails over the Country Club*, appeared in March 2021. Only a few months later, Del Rey released three more singles including the song “Blue Banisters” from her forthcoming album of the same name. *Blue Banisters* arrived in October of that year, featuring production on some songs from Kanye West and Kid Cudi producer Mike Dean. It reached eight on the Billboard 200. In December 2022, she landed in the Top 40 of the Hot Rock & Alternative Songs chart with “Did You Know That There’s a Tunnel Under Ocean Blvd,” the Jack Antonoff, Drew Erickson, and Zach Dawes-produced title track off her ninth album. Two more songs were issued as singles in advance of the record before its release in March 2023. In addition to contributions from the producers, *Did you know that there’s a tunnel under Ocean Blvd* included featured appearances from Father John Misty, Jon Batiste, SYML, Riopy, Tommy Genesis, and backing on the song “Margaret” from Antonoff’s band Bleachers.

Lana Del Rey could have retired after the cinematic grandeur of her 2019 high-water mark *Norman Fucking Rockwell!* That album’s imagina-

lid but random song ideas. Ninth album *Did you know that there’s a tunnel under Ocean Blvd* finds Del Rey returning to the powerful level of song sculpting she

like a strong step forward as much as it does a worthy follow-up to her best record. The slow, lingering torch song style the singer has been perfecting since the beginning of her career



form on the lovely, string-dazzled melancholy of the title track and the gospel choir-aided opening track, “The Grants.” The tone of *Ocean Blvd* is more mature than previous albums but also more distant. The haunting music-box melody of “Paris, Texas” finds Del Rey on a solitary journey, feeling unsettled about her place in life and getting the sense that it’s time to end a crumbling relationship. Much of the album hovers in this darkly dreamy mood, with lyrics sometimes circling around themes of family or long-term partnership, but usually choosing a thick atmospheric malaise over overt statements. Even the folky Father John Misty duet “Let the Light In” renders its open acoustic guitar chords and soft rock affectations more cloudy than crisp.

Del Rey’s genre experimentation has long been a part of her sound, and it results in some of *Ocean Blvd*’s most exciting moments as well as some of its least. She brings on producer Jack Antonoff’s band Bleachers to assist with “Margaret,” and the song feels flat and unfinished, Antonoff awkwardly trying to fit the faux-Springsteen grumble